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INCOMING TELEGRAM - Department of State

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Action

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FROM: BEIRUT

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 481, OCTOBER 31, 1962

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ACTING FONMIN SYG HALIM ABU IZZEDDIN PHONED NOON THIRTY-FIRST TO REPORT THAT HE DISCUSSED LEB SHIP PROBLEM WITH FONMIN TAKLA AND SUBJECT WAS ALSO DISCUSSED AT WEEKLY MEETING OF LEB CABINET EARLIER IN MORNING.

ABU IZZEDDIN SAID GOL CONSENSUS IS THAT FLAG OF CONVENIENCE REGISTRATION IS MATTER OF LEB LAW AND IN HARMONY WITH THIS COUNTRY'S STRONG BELIEF IN FREE AND OPEN ECONOMIC SOCIETY. ACCORDINGLY GOL CANNOT CHANGE ITS LAWS AND REGULATIONS IN THIS MATTER. ABU IZZEDDIN SAID TAKLA HAD DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT WITH USG OFFICIALS AND HAD EXPLAINED GOL'S INABILITY TO CONTROL SHIPS MOST OF WHICH IT NEVER SEES.

ABU IZZEDDIN THEN SAID THAT AS GESTURE OF FRIENDSHIP TO U.S. ALL LEB DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR ESTABLISHMENTS BEING NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY NOT RPT NOT TO ISSUE ANY NEW SHIP REGISTRATIONS. THEY BEING INSTRUCTED THAT IF ANY APPLICATIONS ARE MADE, PARTICULARS ARE TO BE SENT TO BEIRUT WHERE APPLICATIONS WILL BE TAKEN "UNDER STUDY". ABU IZZEDDIN SAID THIS MEANS THEY WILL BE STALLED.

ABU IZZEDDIN SAID TAKLA HOPES THAT IN RESPONSE TO THIS GOL MOVE USG CAN AT APPROPRIATE TIME ISSUE SOME SORT OF STATEMENT WITH REFERENCE TO SHIPPING PROBLEM SHOWING US

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-2- 481, OCTOBER 31, 4 PM, FROM BEIRUT

661 ~~UNDERSTANDING OF AND FAVORABLE DISPOSITION TOWARD LEBANON. TAKLA HOPES HE MIGHT BE APPRISED OF ANY SUCH STATEMENT IN ADVANCE.~~

IN EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR STEP WHICH GOL HAS TAKEN, I CAUTIONED ABU IZZEDDIN THAT USG ACTIONS INEVITABLE MUST BE GOVERNED BY LAW AND IN THIS CASE SECTION 107 OF AID LEGISLATION, TEXT OF WHICH HAD BEEN SENT TO FONMINISTRY. I SAID FOR EXAMPLE IF ANY LEB-REGISTERED SHIP CARRIES ARMS TO CUBA USG REACTION IS AUTOMATIC AND EVEN PRESIDENT CANNOT WAIVE IT. I NOTED THAT ALL OF MY DISCUSSION HAS BEEN WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS AND THAT UNDOUBTEDLY WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS THERE WOULD BE MORE FOR TAKLA AND ME TO TALK ABOUT.

661 COMMENT. ~~GOL IS OBVIOUSLY UNHAPPY THAT WORLD MAY BE GETTING IMPRESSION THAT LEBANON IS ENGAGING IN INTERNATIONAL GUN-RUNNING, ETC. WHILE NOT RPT NOT DIVERSE HAVING LEB SQUIRM A BIT, EMBASSY CONTINUES OF BELIEF THAT AS LONG AS PROBLEM COMES UNDER SECTION 107(B) PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION SHOULD BE MADE THAT STOPPING SMALL AMOUNT OF RESIDUAL AID HERE WOULD BE CONTRARY TO OUR NATIONAL INTEREST.~~

REQUEST DEPT. NOT RPT NOT ANNOUNCE PUBLICLY GOL'S DEFERRAL OF NEW REGISTRATIONS UNLESS AND UNTIL WE HAVE OBTAINED GOL APPROVAL TO DO SO.

MEYER.

HLN

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